

# LADDER SAFETY

Injuries and fatalities from ladder use are preventable. Before you choose a ladder, think **SAFETY**.

Know the **STYLE**, **SIZE**, **DUTY RATING**, and **MATERIAL** of the ladder you are choosing.



## STYLE

There are two styles of ladders to choose from. Make sure you choose the right style of ladder for your specific task.

**INDOOR**– a step stool, step ladder, platform or multi-purpose ladder is usually recommended.

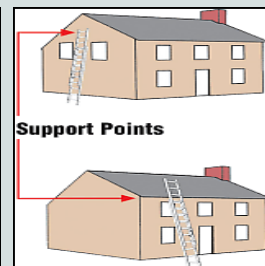
**OUTDOOR**– a taller step, multi-purpose or an extension ladder is often more appropriate.

## SIZE

**STEPLADDER**– choose a ladder approximately 4 feet less than the maximum height to reach. If the maximum height to reach is 8 feet, choose a 4 foot ladder. If the maximum height to reach is 14 feet, choose a 10 foot ladder.

**EXTENSION LADDER**– choose a ladder approximately 7 feet more than the maximum support point\*. If the support point is 9', choose a 16' ladder. If the height to support point is 9'-13', choose a 20' ladder. If the height to support point is 13'-17' choose a 24' ladder.

\*(See image to the side for illustration of support point)



## DUTY RATING

The duty rating for each ladder includes not only the weight of the user but also the weight of any clothing, tools, and materials that may be used while on the ladder.

Load Capacity	375 lbs	300 lbs	250 lbs	225 lbs	200 lbs
Duty Rating	Special Duty Professional use Type IAA	Extra Heavy Duty Professional use Type IA	Heavy Duty Industrial use Type I	Medium Duty Commercial use Type II	Light Duty Household use Type III

## LADDER MATERIAL

**FIBERGLASS**– Electrically non-conductive, strong    **ALUMINUM**– Strong light weight, corrosion resistant

**WOOD**– Economical, electrically non conductive when clean and dry.

## LADDER SAFETY TIPS

**Read Instruction Labels**– Failure to read and follow instructions on the ladder may result in injury or death.

**Inspect the Ladder**– Look over the ladder carefully each time before climbing. Make sure that working parts move properly. Do not use a damaged ladder.

**Care and Maintenance**– Keep ladders in good condition. Clean spills or drips and keep the ladder free from oil, paint, or other slippery materials. Inspect the rails of fiberglass ladders for weathering due to UV exposure, and keep the ladder protected from heat, weather, and corrosive materials.

Use fiberglass ladders if there is even a remote possibility of working near electricity or overhead power lines. NEVER use metal, water logged or dirty wood ladders near electricity!!

## CLIMBING THE LADDER

Fully open the step ladder and firmly lock both spreaders. **POSITION THE LADDER SO YOU CAN FACE YOUR WORK AND DO NOT HAVE TO LEAN SIDEWAYS.** Keep your body centered on the ladder. Hold the ladder with one hand while working with the other hand whenever possible. NEVER let your belt buckle pass beyond either ladder rail.

Place top of the extension ladder so both rails are fully supported. Support area should be at least 12 inches wide on both sides of the ladder. Get help with a ladder that is too heavy to handle alone.

Climb facing the ladder. Center your body between the rails. Maintain a firm grip. Always move one step at a time, firmly setting one foot before moving the other. Don't climb a closed stepladder. It may slip out from under you.

Haul materials up on a line rather than carry them up an extension ladder.

**DO NOT STAND ABOVE THE HIGHEST SAFE STANDING LEVEL.** Don't stand above the 2nd step from the top of the stepladder and the 4th rung from the top of an extension ladder. Do not sit or stand on the top or pail shelf.

DO NOT DO THIS!



## References:

University of Arizona  
Risk Management

Any questions please  
contact the IH Intern  
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